

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 301269

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 301269

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG PFOR EG US

SUBJECT: NEW OIL EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION AGREEMENTS IN
THE SINAI

REF: CAIRO 16748

1. "L IS IN PROCESS OF PREPARING OUR LEGAL OPINION ON THE
LEGITIMACY OF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE BUFFER ZONE.
WILL ADVISE.

2. DURING VISIT TO DEPARTMENT IN OCTOBER FOREIGN MINISTRY
LEGAL ADVISOR AL ARABY TOLD DEPUTY LEGAL ADVISOR ALDRICH
THAT HE UNDERSTOOD FROM UN SECRETARY GENERAL THAT U.S. BE-
LIEVES ACCESS TO BUFFER ZONE SHOULD BE DISCUSSED AT JOINT
COMMISSION. EGYPT BELIEVES THAT THIS ISSUE DOES NOT BELONG
IN THE JOINT COMMISSION, SINCE THE JOINT COMMISSION IS
COMPETENT TO DISCUSS QUESTIONS ARISING OUT OF THE AGREEMENT,
AND THE AGREEMENT CONTAINS NO PROVISION RELATING TO OR
LIMITING EGYPTIAN CIVILIAN ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS OIL DEVELOP-
MENT, IN THE BUFFER ZONE. ALDRICH SAID THAT SINAI II
AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR U.N. CONTROL OF ACCESS TO BUFFER
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PAGE 02 STATE 301269

ZONE, AND QUOTE THERE THUS APPEARED TO BE A QUESTION, NOT

CLARIFIED BY THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT, BUT ARISING OUT
OF IT, AS TO HOW THAT CONTROL WAS TO BE EXERCISED UNQUOTE.

AL ARABY REPLIED EGYPT DID NOT TAKE THAT VIEW.

3. THE DEPARTMENT HAS TOLD REPRESENTATIVES OF U.S. OIL
COMPANIES WHICH HAVE EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN TAKING UP A
CONCESSION OFFERED BY EGYPT TO EXPLORE FOR OIL IN THE
BUFFER ZONE OF THE SINAI THAT THE MATTER OF ACCESS TO THE
BUFFER ZONE, WHICH IS CONTROLLED BY THE U.N., IS
UNRESOLVED. COMPANIES CONCLUDING CONTRACTS WITH EGYPT FOR
THIS ACREAGE SHOULD PROTECT THEMSELVES RE ACCESS SITUATION.
WE HAVE TOLD COMPANIES USG WILL RESIST EFFORTS TO INVOLVE
US IN QUESTION OF CIVILIAN ACTIVITIES IN U.N. SUPERVISED
BUFFER ZONE.
ROBINSON

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